

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Edmunds Central School District
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2004-2005**

Team Members: Donna Huber and Rita Pettigrew, Education Specialists

Dates of On Site Visit: September 9, 2004

Date of Report: September 24, 2004

This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

Promising Practice	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
Meets Requirements	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
Needs Improvement	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
Out of Compliance	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
Not applicable	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

Principle 1 – General Supervision
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- News release
- Screening announcement
- Radio announcement
- File reviews
- Enrollment data

- Annual application for IDEA funds
- OSEC procedure manual
- Student referrals
- Preschool screening lists
- Student referral list
- Parent surveys
- Teacher/administrator surveys
- Data table I, age and placement alternatives
- File reviews
- Parent rights brochure
- Data by age and placement alternative
- District dropout rate,
- SAT 9 data
- Staff interviews
- Exit data table H
- Student file reviews
- Content standard
- Suspension and expulsion data
- Staff certification
- CSPD needs assessment data
- Contract staff licenses
- District supervision/evaluation policy

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded Edmunds Central School District meets requirement under general supervision. An appropriate child find system to locate, identify, and evaluate children with disabilities, ages birth through 21 years who may need special education is in place. An effective pre-referral and referral system is also in place. There are no students from Edmunds Central School District in private schools and there have been no long-term suspensions or expulsions for children with disabilities.

The steering committee concluded the district consistently submits assessment participation data to the state annually.

Needs improvement

The steering committee concluded Edmunds Central School District has developed an achievement checklist for students with disabilities to better determine and analyze if their levels of performance are consistently improving for children with disabilities.

The steering committee also concluded the district needs to provide more training for paraprofessionals, regular education staff and parents in all areas of the special education process.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with the findings the steering committee determined were areas meeting requirement under general supervision.

Needs improvement

The monitoring team agrees with the findings the steering committee determined were areas in need of improvement under general supervision.

Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3rd birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- B – District instructional staff information
- C – Suspension and expulsion information
- E – Enrollment information
- F – Placement alternatives
- K – Early intervention (Part C) exit information
- L – Complaints
- M – Hearings
- N – Monitoring

Out of compliance

The steering committee concluded the district does not consistently address the need for extended school year (ESY) during the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process. In addition, the steering committee concluded the district does not consistently document type of services needed, frequency and duration of the extended school year.

Validation Results

Meets Requirements

Through file review, the monitoring team cannot validate the steering committee's findings under Free Appropriate Public Education. Extended school year (ESY) was addressed in five of the six files reviewed. Of those five files, extended school year was determined to be needed in one file. In this file, the IEP team documented type of services needed, the frequency and duration of services and how the team determined the need for ESY.

Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- District evaluation list
- Comprehensive plan

- Student file reviews
- Compliance monitoring report
- Interview
- District procedure
- Monitoring report
- Parent surveys
- Teacher surveys
- Cooperative forms
- Evaluation list
- Evaluation manuals
- Eligibility technical assistance guide
- Override procedure
- MDT report form
- Table A general district information
- Prior notice/consent form

Needs improvement

The steering committee concluded the district does not consistently meet requirements under appropriate evaluation. Evaluations were administered, but the evaluation reports were not consistently found in the student files, nor were the reports consistently sent to parents. Prior notice/consent to evaluate was not consistently sent to parents prior to reevaluation for dismissal. Tests were given that were not on the prior notice/consent to evaluate. A multidisciplinary team report was not consistently completed for students determined to be eligible for special education or special education and related services under learning disability.

Out of compliance

The steering committee concluded although the district completes functional evaluations in all areas of suspected disability it did not consistently summarize the data into a report form.

Validation Results

Needs improvement

Through file review the monitoring team validates the steering committee's findings in the areas of evaluation. In six of seven files reviewed all evaluations listed on the prior notice/consent to evaluate were administered and a report was in the file. In one file there was no evidence all evaluations listed on the prior notice/consent to evaluate were administered because there were no reports in the file nor was there a multidisciplinary report available indicating test results.

Through file review, the monitoring team confirms the steering committee's findings in the area of reports. In one of seven files reviewed, the parent did not initial the IEP cover page requirement indicating they received a copy of the reports.

Through file review, the monitoring team confirms the steering committee's findings in the area of multidisciplinary team reports. For students identified as having a learning disability, a multidisciplinary team report was present with all required content completed in two of the three files. Through interview, the district indicated they now document eligibility for all students who have been evaluated and are determined to be eligible for special education services or special education and related services.

The monitoring team confirms the steering committee's findings in the area of evaluation prior to dismissal. The team reviewed two student files in which the students were dismissed. In one file the monitoring team found the district followed all procedures. The district had prior notice to evaluate,

reevaluated in all areas of suspected disability, completed a functional evaluation and determined the student was a student not eligible for special education services or special education and related services. In the second file, the dismissal was a result of parents denying services. The prior notice to meet indicates the parents' and student's wish to deny services but there is no statement in the prior notice or the meeting notes indicating the parents were offered the opportunity to evaluate the student prior to dismissal.

Out of compliance

ARSD 24:05:25:04 Evaluation procedures

School districts shall ensure a child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability and that evaluation procedures include a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional and developmental information about the child, including information provided by parents that may assist in developing the content of the child's IEP.

Through file review, the monitoring team confirms the steering committee's findings in the area of functional evaluation reports. In six of seven files reviewed, functional evaluations were administered but the information was not consistently summarized in a report form and given to parents. There was one speech file that did not have the functional information summarized into a report form. Two additional files lacked a written report summarizing functional skills in the area of academic achievement.

Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- OSEC procedure manual
- Parent rights brochure
- Prior notice form
- Surrogate parent technical assistance guide
- Prior notice/consent form
- Student file reviews
- Data table L, complaints and hearings

Meets requirements

The steering committee concludes the district consistently ensures all procedural safeguards have been met. Parents are consistently informed of their rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The district will typically assign a surrogate parent if no parent can be identified. The district also provides the parents of a child with a disability the right to inspect and review all educational records.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through file review, the monitoring team confirms the steering committee's findings under procedural safeguards in the area of parental rights.

Out of compliance

ARSD 24:05:30:15. Surrogate parents. Each school district shall establish procedures for the assignment of a surrogate parent to ensure that the rights of a child are protected if no parent can be identified and the district, after reasonable effort, cannot discover the whereabouts of a parent or if the child is a ward of the state. At a minimum, a district's method for determining whether a child needs a surrogate parent must include the following: The district superintendent or designee shall appoint surrogate parents. The district is responsible for the training and certification of surrogate parents and shall maintain a list of persons who may serve as surrogate parents.

Through interview, the monitoring team determined the district is out of compliance in the area of surrogate parent. The district does not presently have on file a list of persons willing to act as a surrogate parent.

Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Teacher surveys
- Parent surveys
- Student file reviews
- Early intervention (Part C) exit information
- Hearings
- Monitoring
- OSEC procedure manual
- Prior notice form
- Parent right brochure
- IEP form
- Child count

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the district ensures a written prior notice is provided for all IEP meetings and prior notices include all required content. The district ensures an appropriate IEP has been developed and is in effect for each eligible student.

Needs improvement

The steering committee concluded the district does not consistently have the appropriate team membership at all IEP meetings. The district does not consistently address transition prior to age 14.

Out of compliance

The steering committee concluded the district's IEPs do not consistently contain all required content. Strengths and needs addressed on the present level of performance are not consistently identified in each area of suspected disability and do not link directly to functional evaluation. How the student's disability affects his/her progress in the general curriculum was not consistently documented. Modifications for state/district assessments were not consistently documented as per the modification page.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through file review, the monitoring team confirms the steering committee's findings under Individualized Education Program. The monitoring team could not confirm the steering committee's findings in the area of appropriate team membership not present at IEP meetings. The monitoring team determined appropriate team membership was present at IEP meetings in seven of seven files reviewed.

Through file review, the monitoring team could not validate all of the steering committee's findings in the area of IEP as being out of compliance. In seven of seven the files reviewed by the monitoring team, goals and objectives linked to functional evaluations and modifications were addressed for state/district assessment.

Needs Improvement

Through file review the monitoring team confirms the steering committee's findings in the area of transition. In reviewing one file of a 15 year old student requiring transition, the monitoring team determined the transition services were not a set of activities which promoted movement from school to post-school activities. Although the student's goals related directly to transition, the team did not document such on the transition page. Also, when documenting the course of study, the IEP team did not complete the student's entire course of study for her junior and senior year.

Out of compliance

ARSD 24:05:27:01.03. Content of individualized education program. Each student's individualized education program shall include: A statement of the student's present levels of educational performance, how the student's disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general curriculum, a statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives, a statement of how the student's parents will be regularly informed (through such means as periodic report cards), at least as often as parents are informed of their nondisabled student's progress.

Through file review, the monitoring team agrees with the steering committee's findings in the area of IEP content. The IEP teams did not consistently address all areas of IEP content. In two of seven files reviewed, parent input was not documented on the present level of performance. In four of seven files reviewed the team did not adequately document how the student's disability affects his/her progress in the general curriculum. Statements such as "Without 1:1 assistance in helping student with math..." and "continued upgrading of student's adaptive abilities will provide her greater independence ..." does not address how the disability affects the student's progress in the general curriculum.

Through interview, the monitoring team determined the school district reports student progress to parents eight times a year for nondisabled students but reported progress for students with a disability only four times a year. Parents must be informed of their student's progress at least as often as parents are informed of their nondisabled student's progress.

In three of the seven files reviewed, annual goal statements were not measurable. Goal statements such as "Student will improve in math problem solving.", "Student will improve in accepting responsibility for her school behavior.", and "Student will improve in math abstract reasoning and understanding..." are not measurable.

Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- B – Instructional staff information
- E – Enrollment information
- F – Placement alternatives
- G – Disabling conditions
- I – Placement by age
- J – Placement by disabling condition
- L – Complaints
- M – Hearings
- N – Monitoring

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the district ensures students with disabilities are receiving services in the least restrictive area.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through review of state data and interview of staff, the monitoring team concurs with the steering committee's findings under the least restrictive environment.